Online Assessment in Oregon

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Development Steps

- Began in 2001
- Computer adaptive testing in 2003
- NCLB Peer Review approval of CAT in 2007
- Phased out paper tests in 2008-09, except as an accommodation

Availability

Past

- One test per year
- March testing window compresses instruction into first six months of school year

Present

- October – May testing window
- Three opportunities
- System is available when students are ready to test and when opportunity to learn has been provided
- Assessment is a resource

Timeliness of Results

Past

- Results arrive weeks after testing

Present

- Results available to students, teachers and administrators immediately

Student Engagement

Past

- Because students typically do not receive results, motivation can be an issue

Present

- Students are motivated by test appropriateness and immediate feedback
- Score validity is less likely to be reduced by motivaitonal problems
- Test delivery system can monitor unusual response times and alert test administrator

Logistics

Past

- Complicated, time consuming handling of test booklets, answer sheets, and ancillary materials
- Responses on paper are physically shipped to scoring centers for batch processing

Present

- Single Web portal provides all assessment documents in one secure location
- Electronic responses are scored asynchronously by a network of qualified raters within the state and returned within a few days

Test Security

Past

- A relatively small number of tasks and items may be memorable and lead to coaching or other forms of curriculum narrowing
- Short testing window is necessary to maintain test security

Present

- Large, varied task and item pools reduce temptations to focus on specific items
- Instruction is focused on underlying content standards
- Long testing window is possible without compromising test security

Cost

Past

- Relatively high cost per test for development, printing, distribution, scoring and reporting
- Item replacement rate about 30% per year (to help maintain test security)

Present

- Low cost per test after initial investment in item and task development
- Possible to form item-sharing consortia with other states

Score Precision

Past

- Single fixed form provides precise measurement only at the middle of the ability distribution

Present

- Tailored tests provide equally precise scored for nearly all students

Testing Time

Past

- Relatively long test is needed to achieve a specified SEM

Present

- Test can be shorter to achieve the same SEM
- Instructional time respected

Growth Measurement

Past

- Complicated by floor and ceiling effects, unequal SEMs

Present

- Equal errors of measurement across the ability range improve accuracy of growth measures

Generalizability

Past

- A small number of performance tasks limits generalizability of assessment results to the larger domain

Present/Future

- Large number of "intermediate constraint" machine-scored constructed response tasks increases generalizability and fidelity with cognitively complex processes

Accommodations

Past

- Difficult to provide some accommodations
- Human read-aloud accommodation may increase construct-irrelevant variance

Present/Future

- Test accommodations are tailored to the student, matching instruction and IEP
- Accommodations are provided transparently, respecting student privacy
- Universal design principles
- Assistive technologies available via computer

Instruction/Assessment Coherence

Past

- Assessment is limited to summative purposes
- Results arrive in the summer, too late to influence instructional decisions
- “Half-life” of instructionally useful assessment information is short

Present/Future

- Enables interim, short-cycle assessments, augmenting classroom-based formative assessment
- Test design can be optimized for specific testing purposes through user-selected test delivery algorithms and timing

Theory of Action

Past

- Summative assessment results indirectly influence learning through the actions of teachers and curriculum developers

Present/Future

- Assessment results more directly integrated with the instructional process
- Immediate assessment feedback has a metacognitive effect when students are trained to self-evaluate

Links to Curriculum Materials

Past

- Teachers are on their own to locate high-quality curriculum materials aligned with assessment results

Future

- Assessment results are indexed to peer-reviewed open source curricula
- Educators have easy electronic access to materials, lessons, activities that address learning needs
- Teachers work in small groups to evaluate and select materials

For Further Information

- Please contact Steve Slater (503) 947-5826; email steve.slater@state.or.us
- Technical information about the Oregon Statewide Assessment: http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=787
- General information about OAKS Online: http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=169